

Finite Control in Brazilian Portuguese

In this paper, we propose a new analysis of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) null embedded subjects in finite indicative clauses in terms of predicative control mediated by a minimal pronoun.

Background Brazilian Portuguese (BP) lacks rich verbal morphology, and hence lacks consistent pro-drop (Duarte 2000, Kato & Negrão 2000); however, it does exhibit optionally null subjects in finite indicative clauses, not only when bound by the discourse topic, but notably also in an embedded clause bound by the local subject (Modesto 2000, Nunes 2004, Rodrigues 2004, Ferreira 2009, Holmberg & Sheehan 2010 (HS10), i.a.), (1), (2).

- (1) O João₁ bebeu [quando 1/_{*2} chegou na festa] (2) O João₁ acha [que a Ana₂ disse [que 2/_{*1}/_{*3} saiu]]
 the João drank [when arrived in.the party] the João₁ said [that the Ana₂ said [that left]]
 ‘João₁ drank when (he₁) arrived at the party.’ ‘João₁ said that Ana thinks that (she₂/_{*he_{1/3}) left.’}

Control We analyse these null subjects as finite control, following Rodrigues 2004, Nunes 2008, Ferreira 2009, i.a., (and relatedly HS10), *pace* Modesto’s (2011) extended topic drop analysis, and Barbosa’s (2019) exempt anaphor analysis. These null subjects show hallmarks of control (ibid): (i) exclusively a *de se* interpretation; (ii) only sloppy identity under ellipsis; (iii) only a bound variable interpretation, (3).

- (3) Só o João₁ acha [que 1 vai ganhar a corrida]
 only the João thinks [that will win the race] ✓ ‘Only João is an x st x thinks that x will win the race.’
 NOT: ‘Only João is an x st x thinks that João will win the race.’ (✓ with overt pronoun *ele* ‘he’)

Not Movement BP has been argued to support a movement-based analysis of control (Rodrigues 2004, Ferreira 2009, Nunes 2008, i.a.), whereby the embedded subject raises out of its finite clause into the matrix θ -position (Hornstein 1999). Such an analysis is *prima facie* attractive in that BP does exhibit hyperraising out of finite clauses, (Ferreira 2009, Rodrigues 2004), as diagnosed for example in (4) by idiom reconstruction.

- (4) A vaca₁ parece [que t₁ foi pro brejo]. ‘Something bad seems to have happened.’
 the cow seems [that went to.the swamp] (lit. ‘The cow₁ seems that t₁ went to the swamp.’)

However, we demonstrate that hyperraising and finite control in BP differ in ways that diagnose the lower position as the trace of movement in hyperraising but not in finite control, indicating the need for an alternative control analysis. First, hyperraising must obey the coordinate structure constraint, (5), while finite control need not, (6).

- (5) *O João₁ parece [que t₁ comprou um carro] e [(que) a Maria vendeu uma casa].
 the João seems [that bought a car] and [that the Maria sold a house]
 Intended: ‘It seems [that João bought a car] and [that Maria sold a house].’
 (6) O João₁ disse [que 1 comprou um carro] e [(que) a Maria vendeu uma casa].
 the João said [that bought a car] and [that the Maria sold a house]
 ‘João₁ said [that (he₁) bought a car] and [that Maria sold a house].’

Second, hyperraising does not show antipronominal effects (Postal 1994), (7), whereas finite control does, (8).

- (7) Alguma coisa₁ parece [que t₁ está errada com o meu computador].
 some thing seem [that is wrong with the my computer]
 ‘Something seems to be wrong with my computer.’
 (8) *Alguma coisa₁ estava errada com o meu computador [quando 1 estava errada com o seu].
 some thing was wrong with the my computer [when was wrong with the yours]
 Intended: ‘Something was wrong with my computer, when something was wrong with yours.’

Analysis: Predicative Control We provide five arguments that BP finite control is predicative (Williams 1980, Williams 1992, Landau 2015, i.a.), combining directly with the matrix through predication, rather than through the intermediary of an embedded logophoric center (see Bianchi 2003, Landau 2015, i.a.), even with predicates that exhibit logophoric nonfinite control. (i) BP finite control patterns with predicative control and differently from logophoric control in allowing nonhuman antecedents both in adjunct and complement clauses, (9), (10).

- (9) O avião₁ não portava nenhum passageiro [quando 1 caiu].
 the airplane not carried no passenger [when fell]
 ‘The airplane₁ wasn’t carrying any passengers when (it₁) fell.’ (HS10)

- (10) As nuvens₁ estão indicando [que ₁ vão se dissipar].
 the clouds are indicating [that will REFL dissipate]
 ‘The clouds₁ are indicating that (they₁) will dissipate.’
- (ii) BP finite control disallows partial control, (11) cf. (1), which is impossible as predication, but possible as logophoric control, compare finite (12) to nonfinite (13).
- (11)*O Joao₁ bebeu [quando ₁₊ se encontrou na festa].
 the João drank [when REFL meet.SG at.the party]
 ‘João₁ drank when (he₁₊) met at the party.’
- (12)*O João₁ disse [que ₁₊ se encontrou na festa](13)O João₁ disse [pra ₁₊ se encontrar na festa].
 the João said [that REFL meet.SG in party] the João said [for REFL meet.INF in party]
 ‘João₁ said that (they₁₊) met at the party.’ ‘João₁ said PRO₁₊ to meet at the party.’
- (iii) BP finite control disallows split control, *pace* HS10. HS10 characterizes split control as possible in “limited contexts”, but their example exhibits two confounding factors: It employs the obligation modal *ter* ‘have’ with an infinitive, which may independently exhibit logophoric control; and the choice of DPs does not rule out topic drop. Once these confounds are eliminated, split control is no longer possible, (14) vs (15).
- (14) O João₁ convenceu os meninos₂ [que ₁₊₂ tinham que formar um time].
 the João convinced the boys [that had.PL that form a team]
 ‘João₁ convinced the boys₂ that (they₁₊₂) had to form a team.’
- (15)?*Ninguém₁ convenceu os meninos₂ [que ₁₊₂ formam um bom time].
 nobody convinced the boys [that form.PL a good team]
 ‘Nobody₁ convinced the boys₂ that (they₁₊₂) form a good team.’
- (iv) BP finite control cannot be long distance, (2), unlike logophoric (nonobligatory) control. HS10 provide an example of *prima facie* long distance control, across the predicate ‘be true’, however, the construction does not pattern as BP finite control, in that it disallows negative indefinite, (16), and inanimate, (17), antecedents.
- (16) ✓ A Maria / ?*Ninguém₁ disse [que é verdade [que ₁ matou o João]].
 the Maria / ?*nobody said [that is true [that killed the João]]
 ‘✓ Maria / ?*Nobody₁ said that it is true that (she₁/?*they₁) killed João.’
- (17) *As nuvens₁ estão indicando [que é verdade [que ₁ vão se dissipar]].
 the clouds are indicating [that is true [that go REFL dissipate]]
 ‘The clouds₁ are indicating that it is true that (they₁) will dissipate.’ cf. (10)
- Thus, these are derived through topicality/logophora, not finite control. Note that such exceptional licensing of embedded null subjects is available in (14) and (16) since these contain no intervening nominals to disrupt the discourse relationship between the embedded subject and a matrix discourse topic; the same is not true of (2).
- (v) BP finite control cannot appear in subject clauses, (18), whereas nonfinite control can, (19), again indicating that nonfinite control can be logophoric control, whereas finite control is strictly predicative.
- (18) *A Maria₁ disse [que honestamente [que ₁ ganhou o prêmio] surpreendeu ela].
 the Maria said [that honestly [that won the prize] surprised her]
 ‘Maria₁ said that honestly that (she₁) won the prize surprised her. (✓ with overt pronoun *ela* ‘she’)
- (19) A Maria₁ disse [que honestamente [₁ ganhar o prêmio] surpreendeu ela].
 the Maria said [that honestly [to.win the prize] surprised her]
 ‘Maria₁ said that honestly PRO₁ to win the prize surprised her.’

Implementation Following Kratzer 1996, Landau 2015, i.a., we analyse pro and PRO as minimal pronouns lacking valued ϕ -features (relatedly Holmberg 2010, Barbosa 2019, Reed 2020). Without rich agreement, a BP subject minimal pronoun cannot be valued by T, ruling out pro-drop. Instead, the minimal pronoun raises to [Spec,FinP], creating the property-denoting projection needed for control (Landau 2015; see also Modesto 2011 and Kato 1999 for subject movement to FinP in BP). This yields BP’s typologically interesting predicative control with independent temporal reference, since the clause is fully finite, with tense localized in T. In BP nonfinite attitude control, in contrast, this predication is saturated by the logophoric center in nonfinite C, yielding logophoric control.